

Detailed Flowchart:

- (a) Maimonides rules like the "Rabbis" (-Minochos 107b) concerning, "[If he vows to bring] *a small one and brings a large one, he fulfills his obligation,*" and only when speaking of small and large ones within the same species.
- (b) How can this be, when one has the biblical obligation (-Deuteronomy 23:24), "*That which your lips utter you are to observe, and you shall do as you have promised*"?

Answers: (i) *From the Person:* We say that his intention was that he will not bring less than a Small one. Not that he wouldn't bring a Large one. Thus, his intention included the possibility of a Large one.

(ii) *From the Object* (animal): The person actually meant a Small one, however (-Rashi, Minochos 106b), "*Within the many is the few.*" Thus, he brought the Small, and upon it added, thus, he fulfilled his promise.

- (c) The Talmud (-Minochos 104b), upon a similar argument,

--["(If one says), '*I specified a meal offering of tenths* (of an ephah --Eipha: 22 litres; 20 dry quarts) *but I do not know how many* (tenths) *I specified,*' he must bring (a meal offering of) *sixty* (-tenths of an ephah). *Rebbi* (Yehuda HaNasi) *says,* '*He brings meal offerings of all sizes,* (in increments of tenths of an ephah, ranging) *from one-tenth* (of an ephah) *to sixty* (-tenths, for a total of sixty meal offerings with a total volume of 1,830 tenths of an ephah, or 183 ephahs)."

explains the reason why both arguments are necessary: "*Had* (their dispute) *been stated* (only) *with regard to this* (case of one who vows to bring a small meal offering and brings a large one instead, there would be room to reason that it is only) *in this* (case that) *the Rabbis say* (that he has fulfilled his obligation,) *because* (both) *this* (small meal offering) *and that* (large meal offering are identical with regard to the portion of the offering that is sacrificed on the altar; in both cases) *it is a handful. But there,* (in the case of one who vows to bring a small bull but brings a large one,) *since the sacrificial portions are greater,* (i.e., larger, there is room to) *say* (that the Rabbis) *concede to Rebbi* (Yehuda HaNasi that he has not fulfilled his obligation). *And had* (their dispute) *been stated* (only) *in that* (case of one who vows to bring a small bull and brings a big one, there would be room to reason that only in that case) *Rebbi* (Yehuda HaNasi) *says* (that the person has not fulfilled his obligation, because the sacrificial portions are larger). *But in this* (case of bringing a large meal offering instead of a small one, there is room to say that Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi) *concedes to* (the opinion of) *the Rabbis.* (Therefore,) *it is necessary* (for the mishna to teach both cases.)

- (d) Questions: (i) From that answer we see that we do not apply the reasoning of, "*Within the many is the few.*" Thus, here too ("[If he vows to bring] *a small one and brings a large one*"), we should not apply this reasoning?
- (ii) How can we say, "*his intention was that he will not bring less than a Small one... his intention included the possibility of a Large one,*" when that is not what he actually said?

Thus, we need to still explain the ruling of Maimonides.

- (e) Question: If we are to say, (i) "*his intention included the possibility of a Large one,*" and (ii) "*Within the many is the few,*" and the law is (-Maimonides Laws of Prohibitions Upon the Altar 7:11), "one who desires to gain merit for himself, subjugate his evil inclination, and amplify his generosity should bring his sacrifice from the most desirable and superior type of the item he is bringing. For it is written in the Torah (-Genesis 4:4), 'And Abel brought from his chosen flocks and from the superior' And so it is stated (-Leviticus 3:16), "All of the superior quality should be given to G-d," and concerning sacrifices it is (-Deuteronomy 12:11), "*and the choice of vows...*" (-Rashi ibid), "*This teaches that one should bring* (offerings) *from the choicest,*" thus, the ruling should not be that he is allowed to bring a Large one. But Rather, that he must bring a Large one?! Thus we must say that (i) "*his intention included the possibility of a Large one,*" and (ii) "*Within the many is the few,*" is not the issue here. Thus, what is the reason for, "[If he vows to bring] *a small one and brings a large one, he fulfills his obligation*"?
- (f) --[The explanation of the *Chinuch* upon the "*sacrifice that varies up and down,*" that, "*And the reason is that since G-d, blessed be He, had mercy upon him and exempted him with* [something less expensive], *it is not appropriate that he push himself to bring more than what his hand can reach,*" can only apply when (i) the offering is commanded by G-d, while here we are speaking of voluntary promise. (ii) by that sacrifices, the poor bringing of the rich is his bringing a different species (from flour to fowl or to an animal), which Maimonides rules is not acceptable. the offering is commanded by G-d, while here we are speaking of voluntary promise. (ii) by that sacrifices, the poor bringing of the rich is his bringing a different species (from flour to fowl or to an animal), which Maimonides rules is not acceptable.]--
- (g) Introduction to Answer: In the opening to the Laws of Promises, when Maimonides lists the mitzvot found in these chapters, he seemingly elaborates unnecessarily, "To heed the utterances of one's mouth and to

carry out one's vow." Why the duplicity? Thus, we must say that there are two concepts going on, (i) The words of the promise that were uttered: "To heed the utterances of one's mouth," and (ii) the intent of the promise made: "to carry out one's vow."

- (h) This is what *Rebbi* and *The Rabbis* are arguing over: *Rebbi* is focused on the person keeping his exact words: "To heed the utterances of one's mouth": "[If he vows to bring] a small one." While *The Rabbis* are focused on the person keeping his intention: "to carry out one's vow" (to bring an offering to G-d): "he fulfills his obligation." Nevertheless, *The Rabbis* don't force him to bring the Large, "and the choice... one should bring (offerings) from the choicest," because, the verse states, "To heed the utterances of one's mouth," thus, he should better fulfill his utterance.
- (i) This 'sweetens' why Maimonides brings two verses in his statement (-Laws of Promises 1:4), "It is a positive commandment of Scriptural origin for a person to fulfill his oath or vow, whether it be a vow involving prohibitions or a vow of sanctification, as it is stated (-Deuteronomy 23:24), 'that which your lips give out (utter) heed, and do as you have promised.' And it is stated (-Numbers 30:3), 'As all that he gives out from his mouth (utters) he shall do.'"
- (i) "That which your lips give out (utter) heed, and do as you have promised," speaks of promises of consecrating things to the Holy Temple, offerings, etc.. Consecrated things, while the obligation of the person is through his mouth, that he do an obligation of the Torah, the actual consecration cannot be through the person, but through the biblical laws of consecration "I shall bring an offering upon the altar," which are the voluntary offerings defined in the Torah.
- (ii) "As all that he gives out from his mouth (utters) he shall do," speaks of prohibitions that are solely the creation of the words of his mouth ("I shall not drink wine... I shall not eat meat...").
- (j) Answer: This is why concerning offerings Maimonides rules that there is also the issue of, "and do as you have promised," meaning the intention of bringing an offering to G-d, and thus, "he fulfills his obligation," even if this is not precisely as, "which your lips give out."
- (k) --[Thus Maimonides states (-Laws of Promises 13:25), "Our Sages stated (-Nedarim 22a), 'Anyone who takes a vow is considered as having built a private altar (called a 'bama', which is forbidden since the time that the Holy Temple was built in Jerusalem).' And if he transgressed and took a vow, it is a mitzvah to ask (a sage) to absolve it, so that he will not have an obstacle before him. When does the above apply? With regard to vows involving prohibitions. However, with (regard to) vows involving the consecration of articles, it is a mitzvah to fulfill them and not to ask for them (absolution) only out of being (financially) pressed, as it is stated (-Psalms 116:14), 'I will fulfill my vows to G-d.'" Being that the, "vows involving the consecration of articles," now entails a biblical law, becoming, "an object of a mitzva," thus, "not to ask for them (absolution)."]--
- (l) Mystically Speaking: An offering, called a *korbon*, is from the etymology of *korov*: *nearby*, and the verse on a mystical level is stating, "When a man wants to give himself over to G-d and get near to G-d" --Then he must bring the offering-- "from you an offering to the L-rd." Thus, while every mitzva is just bringing near to G-d one of our 248 Organs, correlating to the 248 Positive Mitzvot, or one of our 365 Sinews, correlating to the 365 Prohibitions, bringing an offering to G-d is to give over and to bring near to G-d our entire being. This is the very intention of bringing a, "When a man wants to yakriv from you a korbon to the L-rd."
- (m) --[And this is the emphasis of Nachmanides on why an offering brings atonement: "All these acts are performed in order that when they are done, a person should realize that he has sinned against his G-d with his body and his soul, and that "his" blood should really be spilled and "his" body burned, were it not for the loving-kindness of the Creator, Who took from him a substitute and a ransom, namely this offering, so that its blood should be in place of his blood, its life in place of his life, and that the chief limbs of the offering should be in place of the chief parts of his body." Being that in an offering a person is giving himself over entirely to G-d.]--
- (n) --[More than this, an offering is about *Teshuvah*, repentance. And *teshuvah* is above all mitzvot, which is why *teshuvah* can fill all the blemishes created by doing a sin or not doing a mitzvah. Thus, while each mitzvah of but one organ, or one sinew, *teshuvah* is above the mitzvot, and fills all organs and sinews, and is the entirety of all if the being.]--
- (o) This explains why the Torah-portion of offerings begins, not with the obligatory offerings, but of (-Rashi, Leviticus 1:2), "Scripture is speaking here of voluntary sacrifices." Being that it is in the person's voluntary offerings of his heart, in which it is more clearly expressed that the person is giving his entirety to G-d.
- (p) Returning to our specific case of, "[If he vows to bring] a small one and brings a large one, he fulfills his obligation": When a person promises to bring an offering, he is not promising to fulfill an individual mitzvah -mystical meaning of "that which your lips give out (utter) heed," to fulfill an individual mitzvah--, but rather, he is promising the all-encompassing concept of an offering, to offer himself to G-d, his entirety.

- (q) --[In the language of our sages (-Minochos 104b): Upon the unique wording of the verse (-Leviticus 2:1), "And a nefesh (lit. *soul*, meaning here, a *person*) when he brings a meal offering to the L-rd, his offering shall be of fine flour. He shall pour oil over it and place frankincense upon it," our Sages explain, "For what (reason) is the meal-offering different (from other offerings in) that (the term) "a nefesh" is stated with regard to it? The Holy One, Blessed be He, said, 'Whose practice (is it) to bring a meal-offering? (It is that of a) poor (individual; and) I will elevate (ascribe to) him as if he offered up his soul (nafsho) in front of Me.'"

The words, "I will elevate him," is that he will also have an empowerment from Above to "offer his soul": 'entirety' to be more than what he accomplish in this from his own service, there comes that which, "G-d elevates upon him"--

- (r) Thus, in his fulfilling this individual mitzvah --"that which your lips give out (utter) heed"-- of a voluntary offering, he becomes included within the *all-encompassing* mitzvah --mitzva is from the word *tzavsa* 'bonding'-- the *all-encompassing* bond of a Jew --through a voluntary offering-- with G-d. Thus, here the primarily concern is the *all-encompassing intent and concept* --"and you shall do as you have promised"-- that which he is giving himself entirely, and thus becoming entirely closer, to G-d.

- (s) With this, we can mystically explain the terms "Small" and "Large": On the one hand, when a person starts in his service to G-d, he is in a state of "Small". Nevertheless, being that this service is that of an offering, in which he gives himself over entirely, his *nefesh*, over to gG-d, and becoming entirely close to G-d, thus this is the service of his entirety, 'Large'.

--[This concept of a service of *Small* being connected to a service of *Large* is as that which is explained in how the *Inferior Fear* --obedience-- is connected to the *Superior Fear* --awe of G-d's exaltedness]--

And therefore, "And he brought a Large one," mystically meaning that hi *Small* service of bringing an offering, "Will bring him to a Largeness." It will bring him to giving himself over, and becoming close, to G-d in a manner of *Largeness*. That also in a revealed manner, all the faculties of his *nefesh* will be entirely close to G-d.

- (t) Through studying the laws of offerings it is as if we brought the offering, and (-Minochos 210a), "Torah scholars, who engage in (studying) the laws of the (Temple) service, the verse elevates them (ascribes them) as though the Temple was built in their days (and they are serving in it)." And from this "as though" it becomes "Temple was built," in actuality, with the coming of our Righteous Moshiach, and there --in which there will be, "offer an offering"-- "will bring offerings as the mitzvot of Your will" in the third Holy Temple, may it be built speedily in our days, practically and tangibly so.